

Libya Invasion Planned by NATO Since 2007 with the Support of MI6

Mustafa Abdul-Jalil and Mahmoud Jibril have been paving the way for NATO's conquest since 2007

By [Global Research](#)

Global Research, September 27, 2011

rebelgriot.blogspot.com 11 September 2011

Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

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Mark Allen – BP's MI6 man in Libya. Did he arrange Jibril and Abdul-Jalil's positions in Gaddafi's government?

A violent rebellion broke out in Benghazi, Libya on February 15th this year (1). Six days later, Libyan Justice Minister Mustafa Abdul-Jalil resigned to set up an alternative government. On February 27th, the Transitional National Council was established, and on March 5th, this body had declared itself the "sole representative of all Libya", with Abdul-Jalil at its head. France recognised the TNC as the legitimate Libyan government on March 10th and Britain offered them a diplomatic office on UK soil the same day. Nine days later, the Council set up a new Libyan Central Bank and National Oil Company (2). In barely a month from the start of the rebellion, Abdul-Jalil had positioned himself as head not only of the rebels, but of the new government in waiting, with control of Libyan resources and monetary policy and the blessing of the West. On March 17th, NATO began its mass slaughter of Libyan soldiers in order to install his regime.

Clearly, seasoned imperial powers such as Britain, France and the US, would not commit to the huge expenditure of a months-long air campaign to bring somebody to power in such a strategically important, oil rich state, unless they were already a tried and trusted asset. So who exactly is Abdul Jalil?

Abdul-Jalil gained his job in the Libyan government in January 2007, when he was named Secretary of the General People's Committee for Justice (the equivalent of Justice Minister). He has been paving the way for NATO's military and economic conquest of Libya ever since.

First, as head of the judiciary, he oversaw the release from prison of the hundreds of anti-Gaddafi fighters who went on to form the core of the insurgency. Saif al-Islam Gaddafi (Muamar's son) was leading the prisoner release programme – a move he now publicly regrets as being naïve in the extreme – but faced stiff opposition from powerful elements within his own government. Having a sympathetic Justice Minister was therefore crucial to allowing the releases to go ahead smoothly. Hundreds of members of the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group – including its founder Abdulhakim Belhadj, now military chief of Tripoli – were released in 2009 and 2010 (3), and went on to form the only trained and experienced indigenous fighting units of the rebellion. In January 2010, Abdul-Jalil threatened to resign

unless the prisoner release programme was sped up (4). On the second day of the insurgency, the final batch of 110 members of the LIFG were released; his work done, Abdul-Jalil quit his role of Justice Minister soon after to set up the TNC.

Second, Abdul-Jalil was able to use his position to help prepare the legal framework for the corporate takeover of Libyan resources that was enacted so swiftly after the creation of the TNC. Although his official role was head of the judiciary, a large part of the dialogue between Abdul-Jalil and US officials recorded in leaked US diplomatic cables focused on privatisation of the economy. These reported Abdul-Jalil's enthusiasm for "private sector involvement", and revealed his belief that this would require regime change, or as the cables euphemistically put it, "international assistance", to fully achieve. The cables also reported Abdul-Jalil's ominous comment that, on the matter of creating a "sound commercial legal environment" and improving relations between Libya and the US, "less talk and more action was needed" (5).

Thirdly, Abdul-Jalil was able to arrange 'below-the-radar' covert meetings between the pro-privatisation Libyans in the 'Commercial Law Development Programme' and US officials, both in the US and in Libya. The leaked US cables praised his "willingness to allow his staff to communicate with emboffs [Embassy officials] outside of official channels" and noted that "his organization seems to have a parallel track in securing visa approvals, bypassing Protocol and the MFA [Ministry for Foreign Affairs]" (6).

Shortly after Abdul-Jalil's appointment in 2007, the other key player in today's TNC - President Mahmoud Jibril - was also given a government job in Libya. Jibril was made Head of the National Planning Council and later Head of the National Economic Development Board where, according to the US cables, he too helped to "pave the way" for the privatisation of Libya's economy and "welcomed American companies". US officials were positively ecstatic about Jibril after their meeting in May 2009, concluding that "With a PhD in strategic planning from the University of Pittsburgh, Jibril is a serious interlocutor who "gets" the U.S. perspective." Very revealing given the spate of ambassador defections that followed the Benghazi rebellion was the additional revelation that Jibril had been helping to facilitate six US training programmes for diplomats (7).

2007 also turned out to be a crucial year for the other big player in today's TNC, Head of Tripoli's Military Council, Abdulhakim Belhadj. Belhadj was the founder of the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group, an Al-Qaeda affiliate which launched an armed insurrection against the Libyan state in 1995 lasting for two years. His release from prison in Libya in March 2010, along with hundreds of other LIFG fighters, was the culmination of a process that began with an open letter published in November 2007 by Norman Benotman - one of the group's many fighters who had been given a safe haven in the UK since the failed uprising. His letter renounced violence and, according to the London Times, "asked Al-Qaeda to give up all its operations in the Islamic world and in the West, adding that ordinary westerners were blameless and should not be attacked". The letter led to a process of dialogue between the LIFG and the Libyan government, and was followed up two years later by an apology by the LIFG for their anti-government violence in the past, and a statement that "the reduction of jihad to fighting with the sword is an error and shortcoming" (8). Someone had obviously hinted to them that drones and B52 bombers would be far more effective.

So 2007 was the year that launched these three men on the path towards their current role as NATO's proxy rulers in Libya. Benotman's letter made NATO support for a violent Al-

Qaeda affiliate politically possible, and helped to sucker Saif al-Islam into releasing the very people who would become the ground forces in the overthrow of his government. Abdul-Jalil's appointment as Justice Minister smoothed over the fighters' release, and prepared the legal framework for an economic takeover by Western corporations. Jibril's appointment as Planning Minister prepared, at a micro-level, the detail of how this takeover would come about, and cultivated the relationships with the Western companies that would be invited in.

So why did all this come about? Who was pulling the strings?

In the case of Benotman's letter, this would have been a fairly simple matter of MI6 contacting him in London, where he lived, and putting him in touch with a decent PR firm to help draft the letter that would make it politically possible for NATO to set itself up as the LIFG's airforce.

As for the two government appointments, Saif al-Islam Gaddafi was ultimately responsible, but he was clearly not intending the outcome that resulted. He was implementing political and economic reforms driven by both genuine belief, and a naïve desire to improve relations between his government and the West; he did not realise that he was unwittingly laying the ground for the political and economic destruction of his country. So the question is - was he acting on somebody else's advice?

If he was, the most likely candidate is Mark Allen.

Mark Allen was the MI6 agent who had facilitated Libya's 'rapprochement' with the West in 2003. Saif al-Islam had led the negotiations on the Libyan side, so by 2007, the two men knew each other quite well. But by then, Allen was no longer officially employed by MI6. In 2004, he had been fast tracked by the British Cabinet Office, bypassing the usual security procedures, to work for BP (9) and in 2007, he successfully concluded a massive £15billion oil deal between BP and the Libyan government. Could the appointment of Abdul-Jalil and Mahmoud Jibril have been part of this deal? In hindsight, given their subsequent roles, it seems highly likely that MI6 would have used whatever leverage it could to manoeuvre willing accomplices into positions inside the Libyan government.

According to the Daily Mail, Allen was also actively involved in pressuring the UK government to support the prisoner release programme (10). Of course, the tone of their article, as with the current media furore about MI6 complicity in Belhadj's torture, all fit in with the overall narrative that Gaddafi and the West had a great relationship until the rebellion started and forced NATO to conduct a humanitarian intervention. It is all designed to obscure the reality that Libya under Gaddafi's leadership was an obstacle to Western domination and subordination of Africa, and that MI6 has been plotting his removal ever since he came to power.

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